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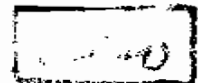
AIN SHAMS UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULA
& METHODOLOGY

AN M.A. THESIS

"DEVELOPING A TECHNIQUE FOR TEACHING ENGLISH
PHRASAL VERBS AT THE SECONDARY STAGE."

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

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Introduction

Because a language is so complex, considerable effort is needed on the part of learners to study it. Many factors can influence the desire of the student to learn a foreign language. If the parents believe that their son will benefit from learning the language they, will encourage him to do so.

When a foreign language is considered important by the country the learner lives in, enough pressure will be exerted in the student to learn it well. A conscientious teacher of English can greatly increase the learner's desire to study the language if he repeatedly emphasizes its importance to the student in the immediate future.

Perhaps most important of all factors is the conviction and belief of the learner himself that learning the foreign language is important enough to justify the effort he has to spend in studying it.

What are the reasons that will encourage a student to learn English as a foreign language?

First, English is useful for many practical purposes starting with passing promotion examinations, understanding

university lectures and references and, securing a well paid job anywhere in the world. Second, a good knowledge of English can open the doors of world literature, science, history, and technology, as well as those of popular songs and foreign films.

For those who would like to get ahead in life, either through higher education or better jobs, English is essential. If the learner can be convinced of these facts, his enthusiasm for learning the language will overcome most of the difficulties he may encounter while studying it.

But in most cases students turn out to be dissatisfied because "It seems to many of them that the grades they receive in English at the end of the year examination do not compare well with the effort they have devoted to mastering the language". [Bowen,p.7]

Bowen also adds, "After learning many grammar, rules and memorizing hundreds of new words, students still find that they are making more mistakes than they are supposed to, and when some brave souls dare to speak up in class they make so many mistakes that the shy ones swear they will never try to follow their example". [Bowen,p.7]

In teaching English as a foreign language in Egyptian schools the traditional methods have always concentrated on the formal level, which is quite different from the informal

level used by the native speakers of English.

So, while teachers of English as a foreign language are aware of the existence of variation between formal and informal levels, learners are not aware of this variation because they are only exposed to the formal level of English.

So, when they produce the language, it appears quite peculiar to native speakers. Even their comprehension of the language is also quite poor if they are in a conversational situation with a native speaker of English.

One of the most pressing problems met by our students of EFL in Egyptian schools and may be in our faculties is the wrong use of English phrasal verbs.

Both understanding and producing English phrasal verbs are among the most irritating and frustrating aspects of language learning to our students who are non-native speakers of English.

Students discover, to their dismay, that there are dozens of verb combinations, the meanings of which bear little or no relationship to the individual words of which they are composed. They learn, for example, the words GET and In, and then some time later they come to know that there is a special expression 'get in' which means (enter).

So, the choosing of such items incorrectly and the mixing of them with different registers are considered frequent mistakes made by our students at the secondary stage and probably by a non-native speaker of the English language.

The purpose of this study is to develop a technique for teaching English phrasal verbs to the Arabic-speaking students who learn English as a foreign language in the secondary stage.

For investigating the problem further, the researcher examined test answer sheets, examination sheets, composition and exercise notebooks and further more consulted English language teachers, specialists and inspectors.

All the above sources could confirm the researcher's primary apprehension of the existence of such a problem and it has been claimed that for the non-native speaker such understading of the phrasal verbs is difficult to attain since most of his knowledge of the English language is acquired in classrooms where he is exposed mainly to formal registers of the language whose feature is the use of the English one-word verb. From the experience of the researcher, it is doubted that phrasal verbs are ever or extensively taught to Egyptian students at the secondary stage.

Prior to the design of the final test, the researcher conducted a Pilot test to try to find out whether pupils in secondary classes could either recognize or produce two-word verbs.

Pilot (1)

Twenty two-word verb/one-word verb equivalents e.g. cross out/cancel; bring back/return were selected and twenty sentences were constructed with a blank for the verb choice. Multiple choice options were provided from which the pupils can make his choice.

For example:

The teacher ----- the pupils because they were too noisy.

a- called down

b- came

c- dropped off

d- scolded

Pupils, as predicted, chose the one-word verb in most cases, and it was clear that there were a lot of problems with Pilot 1 as a reliable measure for the final experiment test. The researcher felt that the sentences obviously could not attempt to establish a confirmed final test. Therefore, the researcher could not use this test if he wished to investigate the matter deeply. Besides, pupils selected phrasal verbs even though the researcher knew they had never